

REVISED STAP SCREENING TEMPLATE, OCTOBER 2022

GEF ID	11435
Project title	Improving wetlands management for biodiversity and improved human-wildlife coexistence
Date of screen	09 January 9, 2024
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1. Summary of STAP's views of the project

This project proposal provided a good overview of the problems and issues to be addressed and a reasonable description of how these fit into the overall social and ecological system. The project indicates how future scenarios may unfold but provided an indicative analysis of how climate change will affect the target areas in Timor Leste and how it may affect project implementation. The descriptions of the existing baseline and barriers were clear and comprehensive and the project objective was well-articulated.

The proposal included a Theory of Change (ToC) and a ToC diagram, but both presented some weaknesses, which should be rectified in the next phase of project design and development. The section on the ToC included a separate description and diagram for the assumptions, which was good to see, although the scope and content of these need improving in places. The proposed project design involves an element of innovation through the introduction of camera-traps but STAP hopes this will be expanded upon in terms of developing additional innovative applications and methods, where possible.

STAP has identified some technical project design issues to be addressed in the next stage of project development, which have been captured in the recommendations below.

Note to STAP screeners: a summary of STAP's view of the project (not of the project itself), covering both strengths and weaknesses.

STAP's assessment*

- Concur - STAP acknowledges that the concept has scientific and technical merit
- Minor** - STAP has identified some scientific and technical points to be addressed in project design
- Major - STAP has identified significant concerns to be addressed in project design

Please contact the STAP Secretariat if you would like to discuss.

2. Project rationale, and project description – are they sound?

See annex on STAP's screening guidelines.

The proposal provides a good description of the **problems and issues** it intends to address and how these are situated in the context of the **system** within which they sit. The analysis includes a comprehensive description of **system drivers** covering socio-economic (e.g. population growth, food insecurity, agricultural expansion and unregulated fisheries) and environmental factors (e.g. unsustainable use of natural resources, habitat degradation, climate vulnerability).

The description of **existing baselines** is clear and provides a comprehensive picture of pre-existing interventions and initiatives and explains how these will be complemented by the current project. The **project objective** is well formulated and the relevant section in the proposal does a good job of connecting this with the relevant **drivers** and explaining how the project intends to overcome the **barriers** identified.

The section on **stakeholder consultation** covers all the basic aspects but fails to provide a satisfactory explanation of the roles that should be played by each category of stakeholders to ensure the success of project activities. The consultation of potential private sector partners was limited to a television company for marketing purposes, which we found to be a rather odd choice. Instead, STAP would have expected to see partners and economic operators that could contribute to the implementation and/or success of project activities (e.g. tourism operators/companies, companies involved in farming, logging, mining or even traders of local products).

The **theory of change** covered all of the main aspects of the project adequately and included a diagram. The list of outputs was very clear and comprehensive, the outcomes were adequate, although we were not sure about outcomes 4.1 and 5.1, which comprised "gender sensitive knowledge generation" and a "functional gender-sensitive M&E framework" but provided no details on how gender will be integrated in each outcome.

The design and structure of the **ToC diagram** were confusing because of the large number of arrows used and the sequence between components, outcomes outputs and impacts, which did not follow the normal order. It was good to see that the ToC includes a substantial list of assumptions, which cover different aspects of the project. However, we found that in some cases these were not assumptions *per se* (e.g. assumption #5, 9), but rather justifications for operational limitations or additional explanations of proposed activities. In other cases (i.e. the proposed alternative livelihoods interventions) we found that the related assumptions did not tackle the core issues affecting AL interventions, such as ensuring that the proposed activities are suitable for the specific local context of the project.

The project will be introducing the use of camera-traps in Timor Leste for the first time ever, which will bring an element of **innovation** although the use of camera traps is widespread in other countries. The justification that was given in the proposal to describe why and how the project intends to be **transformative** was because of the scope of the National Biodiversity Awareness Campaign, which was rather unconvincing and should be revised and expanded during PPG phase.

The project includes a component on **knowledge management and learning (KML)**; this made several references to gender-sensitive knowledge but did not provide a clear choice about the knowledge management systems it intends to use, which were deferred to PPG stage. The proposal provided a clear and satisfactory explanation of how the project will incorporate **lessons learned** from previous projects, the regional and national entities it intends to collaborate and share lessons with, as well as previous similar projects it intends to borrow lessons from.

The section on **risk** was adequate for this stage of project development and included a category on welfare risk due to work near crocodiles. However, STAP would have expected the proposed mitigation measures to go above and beyond adhering to the existing advice being provided to local communities, which is what was proposed.

Note: provide a general appraisal, asking whether relevant screening guideline questions have been addressed adequately – not all the questions will be relevant to all proposals; no need to comment on every question, only those needing more attention, noting any done very well, but ensure that all are considered. Comments should be helpful, evaluative, and qualitative, rather than yes/no.

3. Specific points to be addressed, and suggestions

STAP recommends the following:

- The section on stakeholder consultation will need to be expanded further in the PPG phase to explain the role and function of each category of stakeholders to ensure the success of the project.
- It is recommended that the project develops its own operational safeguards and risk management plan to ensure that unwanted contact with the crocodile population is avoided as much as possible and that an emergency response action plan is prepared to deal with any encounters/incidents.
- The ToC diagram should be streamlined, and the use of arrows should be simplified to ensure these can be followed and are meaningful for the reader.

- The structure of the ToC should be rectified to follow the conventional sequence between outputs, outcomes and impacts. If an alternative style or structure is preferred, then the causal relationship and logical pathways between different elements should be made clearer.
- The descriptions for outcomes 4.1 and 5.1 should be expanded and clarified to explain how gender will be integrated into the proposed activities.
- The description of the assumptions should be revised to ensure that all assumptions are just that. The assumptions should also ensure that all aspects of proposed interventions are covered adequately, with specific reference to the proposed alternative livelihoods interventions. In this regard the project designers should consult STAP advisory documents on the [enabling elements of good project design](#), the [Theory of Change Primer](#) and ensuring the effectiveness of [alternative livelihoods](#) interventions.

Note: number key points clearly and provide useful information or suggestions, including key literature where relevant. Completed screens should be no more than two or three pages in length.

*categories under review, subject to future revision

ANNEX: STAP'S SCREENING GUIDELINES

1. How well does the proposal explain the problem and issues to be addressed in the context of the **system** within which the problem sits and its drivers (e.g. population growth, economic development, climate change, sociocultural and political factors, and technological changes), including how the various components of the system interact?
2. Does the project indicate how **uncertain futures** could unfold (e.g. using simple **narratives**), based on an understanding of the trends and interactions between the key elements of the system and its drivers?
3. Does the project describe the **baseline** problem and how it may evolve in the future in the absence of the project; and then identify the outcomes that the project seeks to achieve, how these outcomes will change the baseline, and what the key **barriers** and **enablers** are to achieving those outcomes?
4. Are the project's **objectives** well formulated and justified in relation to this system context? Is there a convincing explanation as to **why this particular project** has been selected in preference to other options, in the light of how the future may unfold?
5. How well does the **theory of change** provide an "explicit account of how and why the proposed interventions would achieve their intended outcomes and goal, based on outlining a set of key causal pathways arising from the activities and outputs of the interventions and the assumptions underlying these causal connections".
 - Does the project logic show how the project would ensure that expected outcomes are **enduring** and resilient to possible future changes identified in question 2 above, and to the effects of any conflicting policies (see question 9 below).
 - Is the theory of change grounded on a **solid scientific foundation**, and is it aligned with current scientific knowledge?
 - Does it explicitly consider how any necessary **institutional and behavioral** changes are to be achieved?
 - Does the theory of change diagram convincingly show the overall project logic, including causal pathways and outcomes?
6. Are the project **components** (interventions and activities) identified in the theory of change each described in sufficient detail to discern the main thrust and basis (including scientific) of the proposed solutions, how they address the problem, their justification as a robust solution, and the critical assumptions and risks to achieving them?
7. How likely is the project to generate global environmental benefits which would not have accrued without the GEF project (**additionality**)?
8. Does the project convincingly identify the relevant **stakeholders**, and their anticipated roles and responsibilities? is there an adequate explanation of how stakeholders will contribute to the

development and implementation of the project, and how they will benefit from the project to ensure enduring global environmental benefits, e.g. through co-benefits?

9. Does the description adequately explain:

- how the project will build on prior investments and complement current investments, both GEF and non-GEF,
- how the project incorporates **lessons learned** from previous projects in the country and region, and more widely from projects addressing similar issues elsewhere; and
- how country policies that are contradictory to the intended outcomes of the project (identified in section C) will be addressed (**policy coherence**)?

10. How adequate is the project's approach to generating, managing and exchanging **knowledge**, and how will lessons learned be captured for adaptive management and for the benefit of future projects?

11. Innovation and transformation:

- If the project is intended to be **innovative**: to what degree is it innovative, how will this ambition be achieved, how will barriers and enablers be addressed, and how might scaling be achieved?
- If the project is intended to be **transformative**: how well do the project's objectives contribute to transformative change, and are they sufficient to contribute to enduring, transformational change at a sufficient scale to deliver a step improvement in one or more GEBs? Is the proposed logic to achieve the goal credible, addressing necessary changes in institutions, social or cultural norms? Are barriers and enablers to scaling be addressed? And how will enduring scaling be achieved?

12. Have **risks** to the project design and implementation been identified appropriately in the risk table in section B, and have suitable mitigation measures been incorporated? (NB: risks to the durability of project outcomes from future changes in drivers should have been reflected in the theory of change and in project design, not in this table.)